

Astrobiology Outreach Education in Yellowstone National Park

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A comprehensive program is being developed to exploit Yellowstone's colorful and charismatic extremophile microorganisms to change the way up to 3 million annual visitors think about these tiny life forms. Though small, microorganisms that are nonetheless extremely important to the astrobiology story. A partnership involving the NASA Astrobiology Institute, the AMES Astrobiology Institute team, Lockheed-Martin Corp. and the Yellowstone Division of Interpretation has been formed to (i) develop a new chapter for the Yellowstone Resources and Issues Manual (the primary resource used to train interpretive rangers and park managers), (ii) develop new interpretive signs to be strategically placed along boardwalks, and (iii) revise trail guides to coordinate with new signs and provide another layer of learning. A partnership involving the NASA Ames Astrobiology team, the Yellowstone Division of Interpretation the Yellowstone Park Foundation and Lockheed Martin Corporation has been formed to incorporate astrobiology interpretation as one of the main themes of a new Old Faithful Visitor Education Center being planned by the Yellowstone Division of Interpretation. This tiered partnership provides a model for further NAI initiatives that will allow for cross team collaborations that will bring the astrobiology story to the National Park Service nationwide.

References

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